

# THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND MACEDONIA 1834-1945

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## INTRODUCTION

After the end of the War of Independence in the end of the XVIII-th century, and especially after the Civil War in mid - XIX-th century, the United States of America, gradually begin the preparation of their positions for entering the family of the Great Powers, having decisive roles in the fate of the world. Extremely important aspect in this global strategy of official Washington is the attempt of the Americans to become involved in the internal European affairs. As the documents show, the earliest "entrance" for gaining positions in the Old Continent, the leaders of the powerful north-american state find in the Balkans. Therefore, the earliest and most active clerical and cultural missions, followed by solid diplomatic efforts are concentrated in this part of the world. As result, the Americans, as early as the 30-ies of the XIXth century, discover Macedonia, around which, in the last years of the XIX-th century, one of the most important and dramatic national-political problems of contemporary Europe is created. Furthermore, the interest in USA toward Macedonia for the last century and a half, constantly increases, in proportion to the aggravation and constant complication of the problem.

Until now the balkanistic and americanistic sciences have examined this scientific problem either partially /on separate important episodes/, or the Americans interest in Macedonia has been studied in the aspect of history in general - together with other important aspects of the new Bulgarian and Balkan history. The study presented has the aims to follow in particular the conception, the

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\* The most important contributions in the investigations of important aspects of the thus formulated theme have Andrey Pantev, Vesselin Traikov, Peter Shopov, Manio Stoyanov, Petko Petkov, Trendafil Mitev, Vitka Toshkova, Ivan Ilchev and others. Their works are quoted in the study.

basic periods, to show the main participants and most important activities of the interest shown in USA towards Macedonia since the mid 30-ies of the XIX-th century until the 40-ies of the XX-th century. The study deliberately ends in the year 1945. This is due to the fact, that at that time the Yugoslavian Communist Party /YCP/, under the leadership of J.B.Tito, artificially and on anti-Bulgarian basis, create a new “Macedonian nation”. Thus, the leaders in Belgrade and Scopie, disregard not only the thousand-year old history of the Bulgarian people in Macedonia, but also, the centennial truth on Macedonia, defended by those Americans who have worked in Macedonia and have studied its ethnography, folklore and traditions.



## CHAPTER ONE

### THE AMERICANS AND MACEDONIA TILL THE SEPARATION OF THE REGION IN 1919

The Americans enter Macedonia for the first time in the early 30-ies of the 19 th century. They are representatives of the Evangelist /Congressist/ church, seated in Boston, USA. This is also the residence of the Council of Foreign Missions, which publishes a special printed organ - "*The Missionary Herald*". Penetrating the Ottoman Empire, the evangelist missionaries aim at tracing the route for the future cultural and economic invasion of USA in this part of Europe, offering huge market for the North American industrial products. Macedonia is preferred as one of the strategic springboards for the evangelist invasion, in view of its median situation on the Balkans, with the emerging contradictions between the policy of the Great Powers in the region on one hand, and the strife of the enslaved nationalities in Turkey to defend their national interests in this part of the Empire, on the other hand. Therefore, the American missionaries had to study carefully the ethnic picture, political situation and the spiritual aspirations of the population in Macedonia. Without knowledge on these matters, they would not have been able to succeed in their propaganda. Their correct investigations promised to define the exact directions and the essence of their future activity under the guidance of the Council of Missions in the USA.

It is important to emphasize, that from the very beginning, the Evangelist missionaries verify on their own, that the region of Macedonia is populated mainly by Bulgarians. This is testified by the first special report on Macedonia, sent to Boston by the Protestant missionary D. Shawfler in 1834. In it the author clearly states that "the region west of Salonica is populated by Bulgarian peasants".<sup>1</sup> His opinion coincides completely with the evaluations given at the same time by the founder of the American missionary service in the Orient - pastor Sayers Hamlin. In the 60-ies of the 19-th century, one of the most influential missionaries, James Clark,

when touching upon the ethnical picture in Macedonia, is also explicit that "today's peasant population speaks dialects of the Bulgarian language".<sup>2</sup>

Comforming their activity with the moods and ideals of the Bulgarian population in Macedonia, the American pastors soon gain the respect of the most eminent representatives of the region's intelligentsia. Thanks to this the realization of a number of initiatives becomes possible, which objectively supports the further assertion of the Bulgarian national self-awareness in the enslaved Slavonic population of Macedonia. In the mid-1830's, for instance, the American missionary Elias Riggs meets the eminent Bulgarian cultural figure from Macedonia - Neophyte Rilsky.<sup>3</sup> Upon his proposal, Neophyte begins the translation of the New Testament in Bulgarian. After several years of work, the manuscript is ready. Riggs arranges the printing of the book to commence in Smirna. Riggs and Neophyte Rilsky charged another eminent man-of-letters of the epoch, Konstantin Fotinov, with the administration of the publication of the New Testament. As a result of the efforts of the three of them, the New Testament is published in Bulgarian in 1840. Its distribution in Misia, Thrace and Macedonia contributes to the emancipation of the Bulgarian nation through its separation from the spiritual wardenship of the Greek fanariotic Patriarchate in Constantinople.

The collaboration of Elias Riggs, however, with the Bulgarian intelligentsia does not end here. With the financial support of this American missionary, Konstantin Fotinov publishes in 1842 the first journal in Bulgarian - "*Liyuboslovie*".<sup>4</sup> It lays the foundations of the modern Bulgarian periodical press. In 1844, Riggs himself, publishes the first textbook on Bulgarian language, aimed at foreigners- mainly newly arrived American missionaries who were to work with the Bulgarians. The book is also published in Smirna under the title "*Notes on the grammar of the Bulgarian language*". In this connection a technical detail is of extreme importance: the collaboration of Riggs and Neophyte Rilsky and Konstantin Fotinov permitted the American pastor to learn and speak mainly in the western-Bulgarian dialect, which is used by the population of



Macedonia. That is why, the structure of his grammar is developed in accordance with the semantic specificity of the western Bulgarian dialects.

Furthermore, the fact itself that, the American author has entitled his work "*Grammar of the Bulgarian language*", testifies that he had, obviously no doubt, that the Slavonic population of Macedonia is of Bulgarian nationality. This is why it speaks "Bulgarian language" and not some "macedonian language", which neither exists, nor anybody has heard anything about it. Had there existed such "macedonian language" in the 40-ies of the 19-th century, Riggs would have inevitably used the qualification "macedonian", as it would have corresponded most accurately to the essence of the Slavonic language, used by this American missionary.<sup>5</sup>

The correct position taken by the missionaries - to assist the cultural revival of the Bulgarians in Macedonia - permits the creation of more favorable conditions for their own activities in the Ottoman Empire. In 1873, the American Protestant Council opens its first branch in Bitolya. Administratively the new branch is controlled from Samokov, with the task of directing the Protestant propaganda among the macedonian Bulgarians in particular. In an article published on this occasion in the "*Missionary Herald*", in Boston, it is specifically stated that "among the six languages in the town /Bitolya/, the Bulgarian was chosen /for sermon-author's note/ as the most widespread both in town and the neighboring region."<sup>6</sup> These facts show that all the activity undertaken by the American missionaries until the 1877-1878 Russo-Turkish war, is considered as part of their plans, for work among the Bulgarians in the Ottoman Empire during the Revival period in general.<sup>7</sup> Another fact is, that till the liberation of Bulgaria in 1878, the American missionaries in the Balkans consider the Bulgarians as the most important and perspective people in this part of Southeast Europe, with Macedonia viewed as inseparable part of the Bulgarian ethnical culture.

For the period 1834-1878, there is not a single document, written by residing in Macedonia American evangelist pastor, which to



mention other than Bulgarian national affiliation of the Slavonic population in Macedonia during the period of the Revival. This fact is extremely important, as it contains non-transitory scientific and political meaning. The missionaries live personally in the region for decades. They have the possibility to become acquainted with the facts the way they are. These people are not quickly passing or accidental travelers in the Balkans, whose evidences can be disputed.

Of extreme importance for the acquaintance of the public opinion in USA with Macedonia, during the second half of the 19-th century, is the establishment of the Robert College in Constantinople on September 16th, 1863. Founded on the idea of the American public and cultural figure, Christopher Rheylander, the Robert College soon becomes the most authoritative educational establishment on the Balkans in the second half of the century. Hundreds of Bulgarians, Greeks, Armenians and Turks receive their education in it, among whom emerge eminent politicians, bankers, military and public figures. At the same time, the Robert College becomes the second of importance center, after the evangelist missions, where for years reside all those Americans, who work as lecturers or tutors in the college. Some of them spend decades in the Robert College, while the second director Dr. George Washburn for 50 continuous years heads the school. In this way, the professors of the Robert College, who travel frequently through the Ottoman Empire, personally acquaint themselves with the ethnical picture of the European domains of the Sultan, including Macedonia. Therefore, their opinions on this Balkan province have, as well, the qualities of first-class expert evaluation, undisputable by what-so-ever arguments. As an example can be given, Dr. Washburn's opinion on the turmoil in the fate of Macedonia's population, consiously created by the Great Powers with the signing of the 1878 Berlin treaty for the creation of the Bulgarian state: "The Berlin Treaty divided Bulgaria in five parts one was given to Serbia, second to Romania, third to Turkey, fourth part was the Princedom of Bulgaria, vassal to the Sultan and fifth was sustained as an autonomic region - "Eastern Roumelia", states the well-informed American. England, most consistently of

the Great Powers insists on this division, by the way wanting to obtain for Turkey the right to military reinforcement of the southern slopes of the Balkan Ridge. All this was done, in order to prevent the Bulgarians from building a vital state, that could have been in friendly relations with Russia. Everybody who knew Bulgaria and the Bulgarians understood the injustice and meanness of this treaty. Later on, the whole of England released this truth. Direct consequences of the treaty were the revolution in 1885, leading to the unification of Bulgaria and Eastern Roumelia, the war with Serbia, the revolt in Macedonia and the Adrianople region /1903-author's note/, the endless bloodshed and the undepictable horrors of more than 39 years duration. Not to speak of the political intrigues, in which the Great Powers constantly involve Bulgaria since then.”<sup>8</sup>

The document quoted, proves that the American professors working in the Robert College in Constantinople, clearly realize that the “macedonian question” appears artificially as an independent problem in the European politics, following the forced partition of the new Bulgarian state in 1878, initiated by Russia's enemies. For the Americans residing in Bulgaria, it is clear that only the strife “to prevent the Bulgarians to build a vital state”, is the reason leading to the partition of Macedonia in 1878, and not any national, linguistic or other differences between the population of the region and that of Principdom Bulgaria.

Furthermore, both the evangelist missionaries and the professors of Robert College are unanimous, that the problems of the Slavonic population of Macedonia are only part of the problems accompanying the development of the unified Bulgarian nation in Misia, Thrace and Macedonia in the last quarter of the 19-th century. It is to be emphasized that, this thesis they formed for themselves in a moment when there was no free Bulgarian state and accordingly no Bulgarian government, that could influence by whatever means the opinion of the American observers. Thus the Americans evaluations on Macedonia in the period till 1878 are result of the objectively reported facts, existing in reality.



The Americans residing in the Balkans begin to treat the “macedonian question” as an important, independent problem of South-eastern Europe, for the first time in the mid - 90ies of the 19th century. The reasons for this are numerous and serious. In October 1893 in Sofia, the foundations of the Internal Macedono - Adrianople Revolutionary Organization /IMARO/ are laid. In January 1894, the Prime -Minister of Bulgaria, Stefan Stambolov, realizes successfully his third diplomatic initiative for the stabilization of the position of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church in Macedonia and Adrianople region - the Exarchate. Sultan Abdul Hamid issues fermans proclaiming the departure of two more Bulgarian bishops for Macedonia. Exarch Jossif I begins the publication in Constantinople of a newspaper in literary Bulgarian language - “*Novini*”, which circulates quickly among the Slavonic population of Macedonia.

In May 1894, Stambolov's government falls from power. In Sofia, Prime-Minister becomes the graduate of the Robert College, Dr. Konstantin Stoylov. For the first time in fact, an American graduate was coming to the front of the Balkans politics, a circumstance which undoubtedly activated the interests of the americans, residing in this part of Europe. The more so, that during the first year of Stoylov's administration two extremely important things happen. In the spring of 1895 the macedonian Bulgarian emigration inside the borders of free Bulgaria lays the foundations of a new legal patriotic organization – Supreme Macedonian-Adrianople Committee /SMAC/, seated in Sofia. In June the same year, the Melnik uprising begins. This shows definitely the appearance of a new hot problem on the Balkans – the struggle of the remaining enslaved Bulgarian population in Macedonia, for liberty and human rights. This is why the evangelist missionarics decide to look in detail in the theme of Macedonia. The nature of their future activity was going to depend on the direction of the new events. At the same time, the American public had to be informed on the newly arising, big political problem in Southeastern Europe.

On March 19, 1894, “*Missionary News*” informs its readers that series of “macedonian issues” are being prepared for publication.

The text writing is assigned to Dr. Edward Haskell, head of the Bulgarian Protestant Mission branch in Bitolya.<sup>9</sup> In the following issues of the newspaper, the idea is realized with the publication of a series of serious articles sent by the missionaries E. Haskell, G. Beyerd, H. Coll, L. Bond and others. The language picture and the religious situation in Macedonia is depicted in detail. The fact that, the whole information presented in “*Missionary News*” is given as “News from Bulgaria”, shows clearly the character of the conclusions drawn.<sup>10</sup>

The interest shown in the ideas of the Protestant pastors as well as the activation of the macedonian question during the summer of 1895, urge the pastors to write a separate booklet on Macedonia by the end of the same year. It is entitled “*Bulgaria and Salonica in Macedonia*”.<sup>11</sup> The missionary James Clark is mentioned as author, but in fact the work is prepared with the active help of E. Haskell and L. Bond. In this book, once again, the American missionaries in the Balkans, prove that the majority of the Slavonic population in Macedonia is of Bulgarian national identity; the predominant religious denomination being eastern-orthodox, and Salonica being the natural exit of Macedonia to the world. The book is printed in Constantinople and is distributed in 1896 in USA, as an edition of the American Council of Missions Abroad.

At the same time and due to the same reasons, a decision is taken for the transferal of the seat of the Bulgarian Protestant Church branch working in Macedonia, from Bitolya to Salonica.<sup>12</sup> On the whole, these facts speak very convincingly on their own. Even during their first encounter with the essence of the “macedonian question”, as a separate problem in the Balkans, the American missionaries remain faithful to the historical truth. Although the Great Powers separate forcefully Macedonia from Bulgaria in 1878, according to the American missionaries, in the end of the 19th century, she retains its predominantly Bulgarian ethnic image. The Bulgarians are the main engine force of the arising national-liberation movement and it is from them that future development of forthcoming, important political processes in the region should be expected. Thus, the Americans on the Balkans are fully



prepared to meet and closely follow the Macedonia-staged drama in the eve and during the 1903 Ilinden-Preobrazhenie uprising.

This problem, however, has some preliminary moments. On August 21, 1901, a military group of IMARO, lead by Yane Sandanski, Hristo Tchernopeev and Krastiyu Assenov, organize the kidnapping of Miss Helena Stone and her Bulgarian aide - Katerina Stefanova- Tsilka. Big ransom is demanded for the two women, in order to provide means for the purchase of arms, needed by the national-liberation organization in Macedonia. The captives are humanely treated by the rebels.<sup>13</sup> This action becomes one of the most thundering political events in Europe. In the period November 11, 1901, until January 1, 1904, the "Miss Stone affair" does not come off the pages of the American press. Collection of "ransom money" begins in the USA. The "macedonian question" takes a definite place in the American public opinion.<sup>14</sup>

With the resolution of the crisis, are engaged American diplomats in Constantinople, including the director of Robert College - Dr. Washburn.<sup>15</sup> After the money is received, the revolutionaries free the two missionaries. However, both the two women and the public opinion in USA understand perfectly well, that the incident is not a bandits action, but an important episode in the struggle of the macedonian Bulgarians for liberty and human rights. This is the reason for the lack of stable negative moods neither by Miss Stone, nor the public in USA. This condition makes possible the completely impassionate and objective position, taken by the American press at the time of the out-break of the big Ilinden uprising on August 2nd, 1903.

In the first publications on the other side of the Ocean, it is pointed out, that the uprising is in that part of the Ottoman Empire, populated most densely, at that time, with Bulgarians. On November 26th, 1903, the journal "*Outlook*" writes: "Of the whole population of Macedonia, the Greeks represent one tenth, the Turks - one third and the Bulgarians a half, the small remaining part of what is left are Serbs and Albanians."<sup>16</sup> In its issue of



October 3rd, 1903, the same journal correctly explained that, the main reason for the tragedy happening should be sought in the politics of the Great Powers, forcefully separated Macedonia from free Bulgaria during the 1878 Berlin Congress.<sup>17</sup>

The competent historians in USA have long ago established in a scientific way that: "the American diplomats and missionaries, as well as the other foreign representatives in Sofia and Constantinople, /between 1901-1903- author's note/ did not make difference between the Central Committee of IMARO and the Supreme Macedonian Committee in Sofia, nor between the internal and external organizations. For them the organization was one - Bulgarian in its membership".<sup>18</sup> Thus, the newspapers in USA dealing with the course of the Ilinden popular uprising in Macedonia, give in the same place the information on the activities of the military revolutionary groups of IMARO and the forces sent as aide by the Supreme Committee in Sofia.

All observers in USA are unanimous that the heaviest blow in 1903, on the nationalities living in Macedonia, was suffered by the Bulgarians, with the Bitolya villaet affected most: "All informations from the Monastir villaet are unanimous in its qualification of the situation as "disastrous", writes on September 8th, 1903 "*Detroit Free Press*", " It is accepted that between 40 000 and 50 000 Bulgarians have been massacred by the Turks and that there is not a single Bulgarian village in the villaet that has not been destroyed... The official circles believe, that these figures are lower than in reality. Some are inclined to believe that the number of the murdered exceeds 50 000. The Turks, obviously, have decided to wipe out the whole Bulgarian population of the villaet". Absolutely the same states in its note of September 8th, 1903 "*New York Times*".

In its issue of September 17th, 1903, "*Independent*" adds: "It is clear that a mass massacre has been permitted in the region of Monastir. Around thirty six thousand Bulgarians, living in the region, have been massacred by the Turks and every Bulgarian village has been destroyed to the ground."<sup>19</sup> The correspondent of

*“Independent”*, having visited personally the Bitolya's villaet after the defeat of the uprising adds: “Lately, even a Greek, who hates the Bulgarians, told me that he could not sleep at night thinking of some things having happened in the region of Monastir.”<sup>20</sup>

The press in USA pays a lot of attention to the difficult fate of the refugees, forced to leave their homes after the defeat of the uprising. All American editions in 1903 and 1904 are unanimous that the main refugee wave from Macedonia in the autumn of 1903, has headed for Bulgaria and not for Serbia or Greece. This fact speaks, for it self, what was the national identity of the rebels, as they preferred the savior route to the East and not North or South!? On October 22nd, 1903 *“Independent”* announces that “In Bulgaria there are around 22 000 refugees from Macedonia”.<sup>21</sup> In its correspondence from September 8th, 1903, *“New York Times”* depicts the drama of the refugees: “The miserable Bulgarian refugees, arriving every day in Monastir, tell almost incredible stories on the Turks' atrocities, ” announces the correspondent of the newspaper on the spot. “Sixty families from Smilevo, which had been totally destroyed, passed through recently. The refugees saw a man and a woman to sit among the ruins of their house when a Turkish soldier cut the head of the man and threw it in the feet of the woman. Many Bulgarian prisoners had been brought to Monastir. Most of them were unarmed peasants, not connected with the uprising. Twenty Bulgarians were brought with heavy chains on their hands and feet.”<sup>22</sup>

The wide resonance of the 1903 Ilinden uprising among the public of the USA, makes possible for the first time in this country in 1903-1904, the creation of a special public committee, whose aim is to organize action for support of the suffering Bulgarian population in Macedonia. In September 1903 in New York are laid the foundations of the “Bulgaro - American Macedonian Committee” /known also as the “Double Committee”/. For its chairman is elected the Yale graduate- Konstantin Stefanov, brother of the kidnapped together with Miss Stone in 1901 - Katerina Tsilka. Albert Soniksen, a popular American journalist and traveler is elected as Secretary and Ivan Radulov, special envoy of IMARO



and SMAC for informing America on the events in Macedonia, is chosen for treasurer.<sup>23</sup> From American side as members of the committee enter: S. Low - former mayor of New York and close friend of J. House, with whom he is in constant correspondence ; H. Potter - historian of the ancient world and well informed specialist on the Balkan problems; the clergyman Edward Andrews, known in USA for his publications on the Slavonic languages; I. Willer - traveler and member of the American Geographical Society as well as many others.<sup>24</sup>

The first thing that impresses in the case is the name of the committee - Bulgarian-American Macedonian Committee. This formulation leaves no doubt that, the people participating in this charity initiative, have clearly in mind that they have come together to help the distressed Bulgarians in Macedonia, and not some other population. Besides, the enormous activity of the committee, during its short period of existence, should be particularly pointed out. At first, an appeal to the public opinion in USA is written entitled "A Cry from Macedonia". The document is signed by 29 eminent senators, politicians and public figures and is published in one of the most influential newspapers in USA. The appeal calls upon the influential statesmen in Washington and the American society to provide political and moral support to the fight for the liberation of Macedonia Bulgarians.<sup>25</sup>

Again upon the initiative of the "Bulgarian -American Macedonian Committee", in October 1903 at the Washington-held Pan-American Bishops Conference, the topic of fighting Macedonia is included in the Program and is discussed by its delegates.<sup>26</sup> The participating, more than 100, high clergymen state their support for the suffering Bulgarian population. The meeting calls for collection and dispatch of financial funds. It is proposed, that the American Protestant missionaries in Macedonia form a special auxiliary committee in the region, in order to distribute the foods and money received.

On this basis, in November 1903, the American missionaries in Macedonia establish the so-called "American Committee in



Macedonia". It coordinates the receipt and distribution of the aids for the victimized Bulgarian population. Until December 1903, the Bulgarians in Macedonia receive 10 000 pounds of flour and "more than 500 big woolen carpets", used as covers by the refugee's families. With funds from the American missionaries, several small workshops are created in which the macedonian Bulgarians make warm winter clothes for the victims. With the debiting of the financial funds in USA and their transferal to the "American Committee in Macedonia" is engaged the "Kidder Peabody & Co" bank in Boston. One of the most fervent agitators in the financial fund- raising action for the macedonian Bulgarians is Miss Elena Stone.<sup>27</sup>

In February 1904, upon the initiative of the "Bulgarian American Macedonian Committee" in New York, once again many outstanding Americans are engaged in the defence of fighting Bulgarian population in Macedonia. A new collective appeal on the Macedonian problem is prepared, demanding the USA, as the most impartial power in the Balkan region, to undertake diplomatic initiative and "together with the other Christian nations in Europe" to insist on the fulfillment of the 1878 Berlin Treaty clauses for reforms in Macedonia. The document is signed by 37 influential politicians and citizens among whom are: Charles and Arthur Perkins- members of the House of Representatives; Timothy Dwight - influential editor with branches of its company in America, England and Australia; George Fisher and Andrew Phillips - professors in the University of Yale; the Governor of Connecticut and many others.<sup>28</sup> This background makes possible an audience to be given to the active member of the "Bulgarian - American Macedonian Committee" Dr. Shoumkov in the White House. In Washington, he meets and talks personally with the President of the USA - Theodore Roosevelt and State Secretary G. Hay. He informs them in detail on the situation of the Bulgarian population in Macedonia. The leaders of the American state give their agreement to plead in front of the government of England on the problem and to provide support to the English diplomacy in Constantinople, for the implementation of the provisions of the 1878 Berlin Peace treaty.<sup>29</sup> At the same time, "*Christian herald*"

informs, that more than 30 000 American citizens have addressed the edition with the demand: the American government to insist immediately in front of the Great Powers to guarantee the realization of the reforms in Macedonia, provisioned by them.<sup>30</sup> The public engagement of influential circles in USA with the fate of the macedonian Bulgarians, according to a contemporary witness, gives rise in Europe to” the rumors that it is Americans that are guilty for the Armenian and macedonian uprisings - as our missionaries, accepted as representatives of the American government, sympathize with the movement for liberty and independence and give moral support and encouragement to the revolutionaries”.<sup>31</sup>

This is an exaggerated statement. None of the Americans residing in the Balkans in 1903 has been personally involved with IMARO. It is indisputable fact, however, that the support provided by influential politicians, public figures and the press to the fighting for liberation Bulgarians in Macedonia, is accepted and evaluated, for the first time in Europe, as America's real engagement and open support for the cause of the Bulgarians in Macedonia - the main participant in the Ilinden uprising. There is no document from that time, which to show that the American president and the influential politicians of the country have defended the ideals of some separate “macedonian nation”, simply because no such nation existed in 1903 in Macedonia.

United States' s interests in the most aggravated political problems on the Balkans, in the beginning of the 20-th century, does not decline during the whole first decade of the century. After the victorious war with Spain for the island of Cuba, the United States have the self-esteem of a real great power, pretending to the formal acknowledgment of the old Great Powers, for a status of great power with right of decisive vote on the world problems.

In order to gain substantial positions, through which to influence directly the behavior of the governments of St.Petersburg, Paris, London, Berlin and Vienna, the Americans start looking for “an entrance to Europe”. The Balkans and the aggravated Macedonian



problem promise to create multiple conditions for this. Thus, the interest of USA towards the pulsating political processes in Macedonia does not diminish, even after the defeat of the Ilinden uprising.

In 1906, the history of the Bulgarian-american relations registers a unique fact: After staying for two years in Sofia in order to meet in person the leaders of IMARO, the American traveler and journalist, deeply engaged with the macedonian question- Albert Soniksen receives permission from IMARO to enter illegally the region. He is to write a book on the conditions of the fight for liberty. On February 28th, 1906, Soniksen enters illegally Macedonia and as member of the military revolutionary groups, lead by Luka Ivanov and Apostol Voyvoda, roams the region until November 9th. After his return, Soniksen publishes one of the best memoir books written by a participant in the liberative struggles of the Macedonian Bulgarians and certainly the best one, written on this topic by a foreigner.

Everywhere throughout its pages, when describing his personal encounters with the Slavonic population in Macedonia, Soniksen writes that he has personally verified, that it is of Bulgarian nationality. With one exception, it is only Macedonian Bulgarians that feed, clothe and lead through unknown paths the noble American humanist, obviously risking his life only to gather first hand impressions of the conditions of Bulgarian liberation struggle and to tell the world the truth about it.<sup>32</sup> It should not be forgotten that the book is written very far from Macedonia -in USA. In 1906-1907 the government in Sofia can by no means influence him, as the Bulgarian legation is established in Washington in November 1914. Thus, if Albert Soniksen had had any doubts, about whom he was writing the book, he would have said it. Remaining faithful to the American historical tradition, this eminent American humanist discusses objectively and impartially the theme of the fate of the Bulgarians in Macedonia., leaving us some of the most beautiful pages on this topic in English.



In 1912, on the Balkans conditions are definitely formed for the well known Balkan War. Its aim is the liberation of the territories and the population of those parts of Southeast Europe, still enslaved in the boundaries of the Ottoman Empire. United States's gestures of sympathy towards the macedonian Bulgarians begin early in the spring of 1912, when it becomes clear that "the war of the cross against the crescent" is already inevitable. On May 21st, 1912, the American Congress drafts a law by the force of which the Treasury provides the sum of 66 000 dollars, for reimbursement of the money donated by hundreds of Americans in 1901-1902, for the ransom paid for Miss Elena Stone and Katerina Stefanova - Tsilka.<sup>33</sup> Translated in underderstandable political language, this act is open moral support for the cause of the Bulgarians in Macedonia. The American state has it to be accepted as a fact, that it has provided the biggest single amount of money given to the leadership of IMARO for purchase of arms, used in the fight for freedom!

American correspondents and observers arrive in Bulgaria with the beginning of the military activities in the Thracian war theater. The course of the military operations is reflected objectively in the pages of the most influential American editions in 1912-1913. Major A. Frayd visits Bulgaria in order to study and describe the development of the military campaign for the needs of the Defence Department in Washington. In 1913 in New York, he publishes a book entitled "Some lessons learned in the Balkan War".<sup>34</sup> There, as well as in all other publications on the subject, the successes realized by the Bulgarians in the Thracian war theater, are judged as decisive for the out come of the war for liberation of Macedonia

The USA government gives unlimited freedom to the 60 000 Bulgarian emigration, to organize tens of public demonstrations and meetings in New York, Detroit, Indianapolis, Chicago and other towns. The Coastguard authorities provide with priority tickets to those emigrants - Bulgarians - returning to participate as volunteers in the war, as members of Macedono- Adrianople Popular detachment. It is known as an independent military unit, part of the Bulgarian army. Money, collected by the emigration in

support of the Bulgarian Red Cross, is quickly remitted by the postal services. In the winter of 1912-1913, for several months in Sofia from the USA arrive more than 100 000 dollars.<sup>35</sup> When the Bulgarian armies defeat the Eastern Turkish Army on the Constantinople direction<sup>36</sup>, the President of the United States - Roosevelt - sends a message of congratulation to the Bulgarian government in Sofia. On this occasion, the eminent Bulgarian poet Ivan Vazov writes the poem "To Theodore Roosevelt", as sign of gratitude for the encouragement shown.

The unhidden sympathies, shown in USA, for the fourth attempt of the Bulgarian people of free Bulgaria and Macedonia to finish its national-liberative deed and unite its nation, is a natural result of the decade-long understanding in the American public opinion, that Macedonia is unjustly and forcefully separated from Bulgaria by the 1878 Berlin Treaty. Thus, the actions of the governments of Serbia and Greece, which taking advantage of the engagement of the Bulgarian army around Constantinople occupy in the winter of 1912-1913 Vardar and Aegean Macedonia, and provoke the outbreak of the Second Balkan War, known as the "Allies War", meet the open disapproval of the American politicians and observers.

In all publications of the American missionaries in the United States, on the events between Bulgaria, Serbia and Greece in the summer of 1913, it is underlined that: "Big part of Macedonia is Bulgarian and it is this part that has now been given to Greece and Serbia."<sup>37</sup> The forced upon Bulgaria, by Serbia and Greece, signing of the Bucharest Peace Treaty on July 28th, 1913, on the division of Macedonia in three parts, the Plenipotentiary Minister of USA for Bulgaria, and Romania - Charles Vopika, strongly protests against the unjust diplomatic dictate over the Bulgarians. He is the only representative of the Great Powers in the Romanian capital, who refuses to put his signature under the document.<sup>38</sup> This step, undertaken not without the knowledge and approval of the State Department in Washington can mean only one thing: In 1913, USA is the only Great Power categorically condemning and openly disapproving the forceful tearing apart of Macedonia by the means



of the military dictate of the governments of Serbia and Greece. In fact, this means disagreement with idea the Bulgarian population in Vardar Macedonia to be compulsory put under a new yoke - this time Christian!

The most valuable step undertaken by the Americans after the partitioning of Macedonia in 1913, is the organization upon the initiative and with the funds of Andrew Carnegie, of an international inquiry commission on the consequences of the Balkan Wars for the population of Macedonia. Thus, a voluminous book appears in the international humanistic literature: "The Report of the International Commission for Investigation of the causes and the development of the Balkan Wars"<sup>39</sup> This document is known as the "Report of the Carnegie's Commission".

Of extreme importance in the report is the following fact: the ethnic picture of Macedonia in 1913, the situation of the population and the politics of the Greek and Serbian governments are ascertained by unbiased foreign observers in person and at location, as the Commission itself travels throughout Macedonia. Thus, the facts published in this document in May 1914 in New York<sup>40</sup>, are unquestionable source of historic truth concerning the treated subject.

The first facts given in the report of Carnegie's Commission are the findings in the Aegean part of Macedonia. On the town of Koukoush the following is mentioned: "At the entrance of the Greek army in Koukoush, the town was almost untouched. Now it is in ruins - is reported by a member of our commission, after visiting Koukoush", a visit which the Greek authorities tried to prevent as mentioned further in the report. "Koukoush is a rich town with 13 000 population, center of purely Bulgarian region with several beautiful schools".<sup>41</sup>

Following the movement of the Greek army to the north of Koukoush, towards the border with Bulgaria, the commission found the traces of genocide of the Bulgarian population in this part of Macedonia. On this occasion in the Bulgarian translation of

the Report on p.94, we read: "The Koukoush precedent is repeated in the villages. In the former Turkish kaaza with Koukoush as center more than 40 villages have been burned by the Greek army on its way north. The cavalry units attacked village after village, with the work of the regular army being completed by the Bashibouzouks. Part of the Greek plan was the utilization of the local Turkish population for effectuation of planned devastation. In some cases the Bashibouzouks were armed and even provided with uniforms."<sup>42</sup>

As indisputable documents, proving the planned genocide of the Bulgarians in Aegean Macedonia in the summer of 1913, the Carnegie's Commission presents texts of original letters, written by Greek soldiers to their families. These documents were captured with the arrierguard of 19th Greek Infantry Regiment in the region of Dobrinishte village during the Allies War in 1913. In these letters, written by the executors of the Bulgarian population in Aegean Macedonia, cynically is admitted "Here we burn villages and kill Bulgarians - both women and children."

In another letter is added: "We kill all Bulgarians that fall in our hands and burn the villages". The author of a third letter is even more frank:" The Greek army burns all villages in which there are Bulgarians and kills every thing in the way." In one of the letters the author, obviously partly ashamed of what he and his comrades are doing, openly admits:" What we are doing to the Bulgarians is unexplainable. Also to the Bulgarian peasants. This is a massacre. There is not a single Bulgarian town or village that is not burned down."<sup>43</sup>

The authenticity of the last documents is verified in 1913 by the Carnegie's Commission. This fact is declared officially in the text of its report, as the members of the commission have held in their own hands the original letters of those, who in the summer of 1913 made unseen efforts to debulgarise Aegean Macedonia.<sup>44</sup>

The picture, seen by the Carnegie Inquiry Commission in Vardar Macedonia, goverened since the summer 1913 by Serb



administration, is similar. Here are the findings of the foreign observers in the village of Vinitsa: "The Serb soldiers, after entering the village, started asking the peasants whether they were Serbs or Bulgarians. Everyone who said he was Bulgarian was beaten. Afterwards, the commander of the military unit rounded 70 peasants and ordered them to be shot."<sup>45</sup> The commission finds out, that the Serb authorities deliberately chase away from Vardar Macedonia the Bulgarian orthodox clergy, in order to lay a blow on the Bulgarian cultural life of the population in the region. It is mentioned in the report that: "The departure of the priests is the end of the Exarchist Church in Macedonia, the end of the official and acknowledged existence of the Bulgarian nationality. The occupational authorities immediately take decisions according to their wishes. We know that, in fact, they have not even waited for the departure of the priests, in order to start the full destruction of everything Bulgarian in Macedonia."<sup>46</sup>

The scale of the antibulgarian genocide and the methods used for the debulgarisation of Macedonia in 1913, impress the Carnegie Commission to such an extent, that its members state that from now on a new experiment in modern history can be spoken of: the forceful change of the nationality of a newly conquered population - in this case the bulgarian. The report states on p. 155: "The Serb government and the military circles, charged with overcoming of this difficulty /author's note - the reluctance of the Bulgarians in Vardar Macedonia to submit to their new conquerors/ went directly for their aim. They created an imposingly big malevolent sociological experiment, which could not have been carried out even by governments and nations with better possibilities, than the Serb Kingdom. We witnessed the beginning of this assimilation done in terror. The beginning of the Second Balkan War gave the signal for the melting of everything still carrying a Bulgarian name. Then efforts were made at achieving this aim, which surpass everything seen until present."<sup>47</sup>

In the report of the Commission there is information that the policy of the Serb conquerors in Vardar Macedonia in 1913, caused immediately wide and strong resistance among the

Bulgarians. On the pages of the report, p. 169-170 of the Bulgarian edition, the resistance of the Bulgarian population of the western part of Aegean Macedonia- in Ohrid - is described. Following are the findings of the international observers in this part of the province in the autumn of 1913:" Even bigger resistance was given during the assimilation of the populated places on the western border of Macedonia - in Ohrid and Debar, on the Albanian border.... The Bulgarians are heavily affected. All the notable people were either thrown in jail or shot. Several mixed Bulgarian-albanian villages in the regions of Dolna Reka, Gorna Reka and Golo Burdo were set to fire, after what the official statute of Macedonia was considered arranged."<sup>48</sup>

This is the truth, presented to the public opinion in the United States, by the Carnegie Commission's report, published in New York in the spring of 1914. The fact that, this historical document is prepared by a group of impartial international observers /Prof. Samuel T. Daton - Columbia university, USA; baron D' Estournel de Constant - French senator; Profs. H.N. Brailesford and Francis U. Hurst - England; Prof. Pavel Miliukov - Russia and Prof. Josef Redlich - Vienna University/, makes the presented facts unquestionable basis for the understanding of a new political problem in Europe: When, who and how started the process of violent denationalization and debulgarisation of Vardar and Aegean Macedonia. This begins in the summer of 1913, with theirs forced partition by Greece and Serbia. The knowledge of all the circumstances on the macedonian problem, permit the important factors in Washington, and especially the newly elected president - Woodrow Wilson, to develop and follow a balanced and reasonable course of Bulgarian-American relations, during the First World War, as well. This, inspite the fact, that at a certain moment the two countries find themselves on the opposite sides of the river.

It is important to stress, that after the forced implementation of the Bucharest Peace Treaty of July 28, 1913, the Americans try to help official Sofia to come out of the diplomatic isolation. Thus, in November in Washington, a Bulgarian diplomatic mission is



opened. On November 27th, 1914, the first Plenipotentiary Minister of Bulgaria in USA- Prof. Stefan Panaretov, presents his credentials to President Wilson at a ceremony in the Oval Office.<sup>49</sup> In the eve and during the First World War, the American diplomacy proposes to the Bulgarian government to follow the line of neutrality. The argument is for Bulgaria to come out of the war with preserved military and economic resources. Thus, with the support of the sympathizing neutral Great Powers as USA, she could enforce a peaceful revision of the 1913 Bucharest Peace Treaty, having torn to three pieces Macedonia. When, however, all efforts of the government in Sofia to peacefully solve the macedonian problem fail, and the circumstances impose the entrance of the country in the war as Germany's ally /at the time only Berlin, of all Great Powers, promises cooperation for the liberation of the Bulgarians in Macedonia/, Woodrow Wilson shows complete understanding of the reason for Bulgaria's behavior.

During the whole First World War, Washington knows that the Bulgarians do not pursue conqueror's imperialistic aims, but are searching for resolution of the injustice suffered in 1913 by their neighbors. For this reason, even after the entrance of the United States in the war in the summer of 1917 as partners of the forces of the Entente, Wilson does not break the official diplomatic relations between Sofia and Washington. Till the end of the war, both Stefan Panaretov and Dominique Murphy, the General Consul of USA in Sofia, send regularly reports to their governments and enjoy the support of the authorities of both countries. More so that, since the summer of 1918, Stefan Panaretov remains the only official diplomatic representative of a country, member of the Axis forces, that continues his work in the capital of the United States. The American General Consul, Dominique Murphy, is even included in the Bulgarian delegation, sent to Salonica in September 1918 to sign the cease-fire treaty between Bulgaria, on one side, and the forces of the Entente, on the other.

On such a background, several other important events become possible, illustrating the important positive sides of the Bulgarian-

american relations, connected with the macedonian problem. On January 6th, 1918, the Protestant missionaries Dr. Edward Haskel and Rouvim Markum, accompanied by their wives and ten small children, venture voluntarily on a long and perilous journey from Sofia to New York. They cross the front lines in order to prove to President Wilson, that he has to back up the cause of the Bulgarians in Macedonia during the forthcoming peace conference. In America they meet the president's aide Col. Hause and other responsible officials in the diplomatic circles and the media.<sup>50</sup>

After the end of the war, the benevolent attitude of the Americans permits the Macedono-Bulgarian emigration to organize a grandiose congress in Chicago in December 1st -6th, 1918. Two hundred and three delegates and many guests participate in it. Completely freely, in a faraway country, without any possibility of Bulgarian governmental influence, this part of the people of Macedonia loudly declares. "Macedonia is populated with Bulgarians and as such, until the desire of this Bulgarians is not fulfilled and full freedom for unification with Mother Bulgaria, on the basis of President Wilson's peace program, is not given, the peace on the Balkans will not be established."<sup>51</sup>

Clear and categorical support to this principal statement, freely spoken by the macedonian Bulgarian emigration the United States at their December 1918 Congress in Chicago, is given by all American guests, well knowing the history and essence of the macedonian problem. In his speech in front of the delegates, the missionary Dr. Ellmar Count points out: "Bulgaria, as a country of culture and progress, and the justice being on her side, should be given the chance to unite the Bulgarians of Macedonia with those in Bulgaria. No union with Greece, Serbia or Romania, as these countries are not for the progress and democracy."<sup>52</sup> In his multiple statements in front of the Congress, the head of the American Protestant Mission in Bulgaria, Dr. Edward Haskel, clearly states: "enslaved Macedonia is Bulgarian" and supports the demands of the emigration for unification with Bulgaria.



The big expert on Macedonia, Albert Soniksen, sends a similar statement to President Wilson in the eve of Paris' Peace Conference.<sup>53</sup> In the spring and summer of 1918, clear voices in defence of the macedonian Bulgarians are raised by the former American general consul in Sofia - Dominique Murphy, Miss Elena Stone, popular American journalists like E.H. Youlsary and others. Even the wife of President Wilson admits openly in a special public letter addressed to the chairwoman of the women's association "The Bulgarian Woman in America", that "the demands of their /Bulgarian - a.n./ people for sympathy must find place in the hearts of all of us"<sup>54</sup>, those who decide the world's fate. During the 1919 Paris Peace Conference, however, this idea is followed only by her husband - the President of the United States, Woodrow Wilson.

The American delegation, headed by the President himself, is the only one, supporting the cause of the Bulgarian people. Due to the American position, Serbia does not succeed in moving farther to the East its eastern border and occupying new Bulgarian territories. Western Thrace is not immediately handed over to Greece. The anglo-french diplomacy, in silent agreement succeeds, during the Conference's course, to isolate Wilson from the decisions on the borderline problems. Taking advantage of the moral and material help of the USA for winning the war against the forces of the Triple Axis, Lloyd George and Clemenceaux take for themselves the role of main arbiters in the European affairs and do not permit the American ideas, formulated by Wilson, to become the foundations of the solution of the Balkan problems.

With the enforcement of the Neuilly Peace Treaty on November 27th, 1919, the victorious forces in Europe impose the definite partition of Macedonia. The Vardar part of the region is left in the domain of the artificially enlarged Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenians /later Yugoslavia/, Aegean Macedonia enters the borders of Greece and the Pirin part of the region is left to Bulgaria. A new dramatic epoch begins for the predominant Bulgarian population. Violating the principles of humanism and historical justice, the European Great Powers- victors in the First

World War, ignore completely the truth on the national image of the macedonian Slavs. In this way, they show disrespect for the opinions of scientists and diplomats of their own countries, as well as ignore the eighty year- long impartial efforts of the American missionaries, scientists, travelers and journalists, who prove continuously, since the 30ies of 19th century until 1919, one and the same thing: the predominant Slavonic population in Macedonia is of Bulgarian nationality and for this reason, during the whole period examined, the Americans sympathize with its struggles for liberation and unification with Bulgaria.



## NOTES

### CHAPTER ONE

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## CHAPTER TWO

### FORMATION AND ACTIVITY OF THE MACEDONO - BULGARIAN LOBBY IN THE USA

In the period between the two World Wars, the United States of America changes in depth the logics of its European politics. The first decisive attempt, undertaken by President Wilson in the period 1915 - 1919, his country to obtain in reality the status of an accepted Great Power with decisive vote on the world problems, does not give the expected results. England and France, actively supported by their Balkan allies Serbia and Greece, manage to preserve Europe as a “non- American sphere of influence”. Paris and London do not permit, the well-known Wilson's Peace Program to become foundation of the post-war reconstruction of the old continent and the world. At the same time the accumulated, unseen before, antagonism between defeated and victors, after 1919, and especially the incredible escalation of revolutionary activity in post-war Europe, make this region of the world extremely difficult for balancing of the liberal American diplomacy. In view of all these circumstances, the new republican administration of President Harding, elected to office in November 1920, prefers to “withdraw” from the European matters. During the whole period between the wars, as far as Europe is concerned, the administrations and diplomacy of the United States follow the tactics of isolationism and non-involvement.<sup>1</sup>

The arguments concerning the attitude towards the Balkans are multiple and grave. In Southeastern Europe, at that time have accumulated the gravest problems, created by the economic devastation, the unseen escalation of inter- state antagonism and the appearance of almost unsolvable minority and refugee problems, after the implementation of the artificial political /not ethnical/ borders provisioned by the 1919 Neuilly Peace Treaty. All this makes of the Balkan Peninsula the most complex and literary

untenable knot in postwar politics. Thus, the change in the official Bulgarian- American relation becomes inevitable.

As sign of protest, that the peace-makers in Paris refused Woodrow Wilson's ideas on the post war reconstruction of the world, the United States of America, officially do not ratify the Neuilly Peace Treaty.<sup>2</sup> Thus, for a second time, Washington demonstrates the moral inacceptance of the legitimacy of the forced Partition of Macedonia and the remaining of the Bulgarian population of Vardar and Aegean parts of the region in the boundaries of Yugoslavia and Greece. On the other hand, under the influence of the above-mentioned geopolitical circumstances, the State Department declines the December 1921 offer of the government of Alexander Stambolyiski, for a bilateral Bulgarian-American treaty, in which the USA to engage itself officially with the support of the Bulgarian initiative on procuring the Bulgarian minority rights in Yugoslavia and Greece.<sup>3</sup> Further more, even if such document were signed, the possibilities of the United States to help in reality for the implementation of the minority rights clauses of the Bulgarian population in Vardar and Aegean Macedonia, were highly restricted, due to the fact that, the American administration refuses to participate in the newly created League of Nations /LN/. In the 20-ies and 30-ies, this organization is controlled by the anglo-french diplomacy. It is, however, the place where most frequently on international forums, the problems of the European minorities are discussed.

The neutral strategy of the American administration remains an element of the global politics of Washington until the beginning of the Second World War. Thus, the official governmental course, does not favor the immediate active interference of the American diplomacy in all internal problems of the Balkans. Included is the fate of the Bulgarians in Vardar and Aegean Macedonia. At the same time, however, a parallel and contrary trend are noticed, mainly concerning the public opinion. Thanks to it, the interest on the new phase of development of the Macedonian question after



1919, among the scientific and political circles in the USA do not diminish. On the contrary, it increases in the period between the two wars, inspite of the fact, that the official authorities do not undertake any practical steps for realization of the rational ideas, born by it.

The causes for the appearance of this second tendency are various and very objective. Between the two wars many missionaries, former professors of Robert College, diplomats and travelers – all mature people with stable opinions on the political history of the Balkans and the tragic outcome of the Macedonian problem after the First World war reside in the United States. The affiliation of Vardar Macedonia to Yugoslavia and the Aegean to Greece, suddenly diminished the possibilities of the Protestant missionaries to work in these parts of the Balkan peninsula. The governments in Belgrade and Athens demonstrated total inacceptance of the activity of the Evangelist Church. Bulgaria is the only country in the Balkans tolerating equally the Protestant denomination and the other religious cults. At the same time the Greek- Turkish War, the anarchy in postwar Turkey and the Kemalist revolution, greatly constrict the field of activities of the Robert College. All this causes the Americans, working in Macedonia and Constantinople, to return to the USA.

Meanwhile, in the beginning of the 20-ies, the revolutionary movement of the Bulgarians in Vardar and Aegean Macedonia is reactivated under the leadership of the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization /IMRO/. Only this time, its blow is aimed at the policy and the representatives of the Serbian and Greek authorities in Vardar and Aegean Macedonia. The “Macedonian Question” enters with new force the headlines of the international press, with the events of this new phase not leaving without work many of those Americans with knowledge on it.

The public opinion is constantly surprised by new and shocking facts on the cruel denationalization enforced by the Greek and

Serbian state in the region. They expect explanations, and the medias, especially the American press, often seek the cooperation of the experts on the macedonian problem, to comment on what is happening around and in Macedonia itself.

Several new political factors appear in the United States, additionally sustaining and even activating the internal American interest of the public opinion and the responsible politicians on the Macedonian question. In 1922, the Macedono-Bulgarian emigration in North America organizes itself on a new basis. The well-known “Macedonian Political Organization “/MPO/ is created in USA and Canada.<sup>4</sup> Clearly expressing the Bulgarian national self-identification of more than 100 000 emigrants of Macedonia, this new patriotic structure quickly gathers strength in the United States.

In its annual congresses and by its printed organ “The Macedonian Tribune”, it continuously brings up the macedonian problem to the attention of the public in the United States. Meanwhile, the organization sends thousands of telegrams, statements, appeals and inquiries to the State Department, different humanitarian organizations, the League of Nations in Geneva, the Balkan capitals with demands for defence of the Bulgarian national minorities in Greece and Yugoslavia. The MPO turns into a powerful “internal American engine” for sustaining alive the American public opinion on the fate of the Bulgarian population in the forcefully partitioned parts of Macedonia, something lacking in this great country before the First World War.

As partner of MPO, an extremely favorable role plays the established in 1924, seated in New York, International Committee for the Defence of Political Prisoners /ICDPP/.<sup>5</sup> With it are linked the names of such notorious representatives of the American society as: Roger Baldwin, John Adams, John Sullizmann, Elisabeth Guillman, Arthur Haye, Oscar Jessy, David Star Jordan, Paul Kelloak, David Mitrani, Norman Thomas, Guillermo



Valentini, and others – all eminent politicians, diplomats and scientists. Under the leadership of Roger Baldwin, this new American public-humanitarian structure in its turn constantly controls the observation of the human rights on the Balkans and frequently dispatches different documents to the governments and their diplomatic missions, in Washington, in defence of the violated human rights of the minorities. Close relations develop between MPO and ICDPP. Together with the activities of the Protestant missionaries, the former professors of Robert College, the diplomats of former Balkan stationing, travelers and journalists, in the period between the two wars, a small but active internal American lobby connected with the macedonian question is formed. Since the 20-ies until the mid-40ies, it is consistently interested in Macedonia and states clear positions on all questions concerning the fate of the Bulgarian population of the Vardar and Aegean part of the region. This is irrespective of official Washington's inability to practically realize its ideas on the Balkans, due to the policy of isolationism.

The immediate stimulus for the formation and the activation of the Macedono-Bulgarian lobby in the United States comes from the complete failure of the denationalization policy of the Serbian and Greek governments, carried out on Macedonia. Hardly eight years after the implementation of the unjust Neuilly Peace Treaty, partitioning the region in three parts, had passed, when the world once again understood that the Bulgarians do not reconcile with their new masters. In 1927, the Serbian police unravels in Scopie, the structure of a big secret Bulgarian students' liberative organization. A noisy process known as the "Scopie students' process" is staged. For half a year, this event is in the pages of the international press, including the American, as it shows the truth that even in the new conditions the Bulgarians continue their fight for liberty!

In October 1927, the Central Committee of MPO receives in Indianapolis, a detailed description of the Scopie students' process.

The document has been sent by the National Committee of the Macedonian Emigrant Organizations in Bulgaria, with request for a wide international publicity. This document is translated in English and is given by the CC of MPO to the International Committee for Defence of the Political Prisoners in New York. Greatly impressed by the facts mentioned, Roger Baldwin reacts quickly and organizes a reception of representatives of the MPO in the State Department and the Senate in Washington, so that the truth is presented there. Thus, the first diplomatic mission of a delegation of the Macedono-Bulgarian emigration in USA in front of the most influential factors of the American state, is made possible. The representative of MPO – Lazar Kisselintchev – is received by the Secretary of State Kellogg /November 4th, 1927/ and by the Chairman of the Senate's Commission on Foreign Affairs - Bora /November 6th, 1927/. The responsible American statesmen listen carefully to the presented information on the crimes committed over the Bulgarian population in Vardar and Aegean Macedonia, and agree to a continuous and current information of the State Department and the Senate's Commission on Foreign Affairs on all important issues connected with Macedonia.<sup>6</sup>

At the same time, Scpie is a place of new scandalous events. In order to paralyze the activity of IMRO, the Serbian police kill the father and the brother of the leader of the revolutionary liberative organization- Ivan Michailov. The new bloodshed attracts the international public opinion and gives cause for new activities. The CC of MPO in USA and Canada prepares a separate statement on the new events in Scpie. Copies of it are sent to the Senators Bora and King, and to Roger Baldwin in ICDPP in New York, as well.

On December 27, 1927, in Washington begins its work the annual congress of the American Historical Society, in which participate many outstanding specialists on European and Middle East history, including the Balkans.<sup>7</sup> For the first time, the problem of the situation of the population in Vardar and Aegean Macedonia is



included for discussion in the agenda. As guests are invited the plenipotentiary ministers of the Balkan states, including the Bulgarian- Simeon Radev, while CC of MPO is invited to send its official delegate.

The main exposition on the macedonian problem is presented to the participants of the congress by the well-known expert on Southeast Europe- Prof. Arthur Andrews. Before the session, he requests a meeting with the delegate of MPO - Lazar Kisselintchev, who informs him in detail on the processes taking place in Vardar and Aegean Macedonia. As result, when the notorious American historian begins to comment the actual political aspects of the Macedonia topic he says; "Thanks to the wisdom and common sense of the government from Gorna Djumaya to Petrich and from Melnik and Bansko to Youndola, the macedonian Bulgarians practically control all elected and appointed authorities, resulting in peace and order in this land. In "Greek Macedonia" and in the macedonian territory controlled by the Serbs in Yugoslavia, there is no selfadministration".<sup>8</sup> This leads Prof. Andrews to conclude that the Balkan peace settlement will be possible, when the Serbian and Greek governments implement and strictly respect the minority rights of the Bulgarian population in Macedonia, provisioned under the 1919 Neuilly Peace Treaty.<sup>9</sup>

Prof. Andrews' report, excites the interest of the American historians and political scientists and observers, connected with the Balkan problems. Lazar Kisselintchev takes advantage of this. With the help of Vangel Sougarev, professor in the Texas Agricultural and Technological University, MPO's representative meets and talks with many American scientists. He clarifies for everybody the political situation of the Bulgarian minority in Yugoslavia and Greece, presenting them with, the especially written for the occasion book "The Bulgarian Locarno and the Macedonian Question".

The representatives of the American scientific circles express their sincere sympathies with the struggling Bulgarians in Vardar and Aegean Macedonia and declare their readiness to discuss this problem in their lectures on European history. Extremely interesting is Prof. F. Laibayer of the Illinois University. In the period 1900 - 1907 he teaches in Robert College in Constantinople, and in 1919 is one of the experts, member of the American delegation to the Paris Peace Conference. Thus, this American scientist knows in details the macedonian problem and the drama suffered by the Bulgarians in this part of the Balkans. This is why, in his conversation with the MPO's representative he declares: "The American people will always be happy to help the Bulgarian tribe, because the Bulgarians seem as though are very close to the Americans.... Therefore, having this also in mind, you will have to double the energy of your activity in the American society."<sup>10</sup> Prof. Laibayer was so impressed by the new massacres of the Bulgarians in Vardar Macedonia, that promised Lazar Kisselintchev to explore the public opinion for the creation of a new "American Committee for Macedonia". On parting, the noble friends of the macedonian Bulgarians declared that with readiness will answer any invitation to give a lecture or write an article in defence of the Bulgarians in Vardar and Aegean Macedonia.

Encouraged by the success achieved, in the beginning of 1928, the CC of MPO gives Lazar Kisselintchev, official status of representative of CC of MPO in America. His activity is now done through the Information Bureau of MPO, seated in New York. This circumstance improves the conditions of work with the friends of the macedonian Bulgarians in the United States. Already, as head of the Information Bureau of the Macedono-Bulgarian emigration in North America, in the winter of 1928, Lazar Kisselintchev is received for second time by the Senators E. King, P. Swason, E. Day, S. Blum and the Chairman of the Senate's Commission on Foreign Affairs- Bora. They all listen very attentively to their guest and agree with his evaluations, that the Serbian and Greek governments do not respect the rights of the



Bulgarian minority in Vardar and Aegean Macedonia. They give high estimation to the books and materials on the macedonian problem, regularly sent to them by CC of MPO since 1927. Especially sympathetic is their opinion on the book "The Macedonian Slavs", which proves the Bulgarian national identity of this population. All of them, however, express their desolation that their sympathies for the enslaved Bulgarians in Yugoslavia and Greece, can not be transformed into practical steps of the American diplomacy, due to the accepted by the White House, policy of non involvement in the internal European and Balkan matters.<sup>11</sup> Inspite of everything, the Chairman of the Senate's Commission on Foreign Affairs - Bora- asks for help for the writing of a special speech on the Macedonian problem, which he is to give in front of the Senate. In this way, although indirectly, he wanted to show moral support for the Bulgarians of Vardar and Aegean Macedonia, fighting for liberty and civil rights.

In 1928, the activated interest of the influential circles in the United States, towards the Macedonian problem widens even more. For his aim, the CC of MPO develops a program for the provision of new books on the macedonian question to important political institutions, university libraries, foundations, important city libraries and others. MPO begins the distribution on the above mentioned addresses with 500 copies of "La Macedonie", published by Simeon Evtimov in Geneva. In the winter of 1928, the second edition of the book "The Bulgarian Locarno and the Macedonian Question" is published. The book proves that until the Bulgarian minority in Yugoslavia and Greece does not receive its rights, settlement on the Balkans can not happen. This book, translated in English is sent to 2000 addresses in the USA. Later on, to all interested in the macedonian problems, many other books are sent, mainly editions of the Macedonian Scientific Institute in Sofia. Thus, in the biggest library collections of the United States, begin the creation of independent collections on the macedonian problem. Especially important collections are concentrated in the Archives of the State Department in

Washington, The Library of Congress of USA, Hoover's institute at the Stanford University of California, the Municipal library of New York and others. This new step undertaken by the Macedono-Bulgarian emigration in the United States stabilizes the information stream toward the Macedono-Bulgarian lobby in the country and gives new practical results.

In the end of 1927, ICDPP in New York, decides to send to the Balkans on a special mission, its chairman Roger Baldwin. His is to verify, personally and on the spot, the facts on the minorities' conditions in this part of the world, in order to precise the future policy of the active right-protecting organization. The journey takes place in the winter of 1928. For the next three months, Roger Baldwin visits the capitals of the Great Power in Europe, the League of Nations Headquarters in Geneva and the Balkan states. In the League of Nation, Baldwin is received in the Commission on Minorities Questions, while in Sofia he has several meetings with the National Committee of the Macedonian Emigrant Brotherhoods. Full with rich personal impressions, in the end of February, the chairman of ICDPP returns to New York.

On February 27th, the Council calls a big public meeting in the well-known "Civil Club". Lazar Kisselintchev is invited as official representative of CC of MPO and Head of the Information Bureau of the Organization. In the detailed report, prepared by Roger Baldwin on the Balkans, is said that the exact figure of "the number of political prisoners in Macedonia is not known, as both the Greek and the Serbians do not allow anybody to look into their dirty and unhygienic dungeons. Macedonian is populated by Bulgarians," reports the chairman of ICDPP, "who are submitted to horrifying sufferings and tortures. After my investigations on the spot, it is clear for me, that the Macedonians are honest patriots, who are not satisfied only with the talking about human rights, but with readiness die for them."<sup>12</sup>



Roger Baldwin's inquiry in the winter of 1928, gives reason to ICDPP to vote a special decision: the American human rights organization officially to present from its name to the League of Nations, the question of the violated human rights of the Bulgarian minorities in Vardar and Aegean Macedonia. On March 31st, 1928, ICDPP in New York sends a voluminous report to the Secretary General of the League of Nations in Geneva - Eric Drummand. It states that ICDPP supports the "appeal of the National Committee of the Bulgarian Emigration in Sofia for the inquiry on how Yugoslavia treats the minorities in Macedonia". As the only route for the future, is pointed out the necessity for the League of Nations to request from the government in Belgrade to guarantee the minorities' rights and freedoms of the Bulgarians in Vardar Macedonia.

The report to Eric Drummand is signed by Roger Baldwin, who in handwritten appendix adds that the author has verified personally the presented facts.<sup>13</sup> Thus, thanks to the formation and mobilization of the Macedono-Bulgarian lobby in the USA, in the end of the 20-ies, for the first time since the implementation of the 1919 Neuilly Peace Treaty, an influential foreign human rights organization solidarizes publicly, in front of the League of Nations, with the demands of the Bulgarian government and the emigrant organizations in Sofia, for cease of the terror and chase of the Bulgarian minorities in Yugoslavia and Greece. This extremely important demand is backed by the reputation of such eminent American politicians, scientists and diplomats as: J.Adams, J. Sullivan, E. Guillman, A.Hey, O.Jessy, D.S.Jordan, P.Kelloak, D. Mitrany, N. Thomas, G. Valentini, their names being written with special letters on the official documents of the ICDPP in New York.

In the summer of 1928, new dramatic events take place in Yugoslavia. A Serbian nationalist shoots in coldblood the leaders of the Croatia's opposition, inside the building of Belgrade's parliament. Yugoslavian money is involved in the destructive

activities toward the IMRO – the main revolutionary- liberative organization on the Balkans, fighting for the defence of the Macedonian Bulgarians in Vardar and Aegean Macedonia. Thus, an acute internal crisis is provoked in IMRO, as a result of which, is murdered one of its most influential leaders, General Alexander Protogerov. Once again, the world's attention is focused on Yugoslavia and its minorities' problems.

For the clarification of the logics of these new events in the macedonian liberation movement, in November 1928, the State Department authorizes Prof. Herbert Gibbens to meet and talk in details with a representative of CC of MPO in the United States. Prof. Gibbens had worked as correspondent of "New York Herald" in Turkey and the Middle East in the period 1908 - 1918, and is highly respected in the circles of the Macedono-Bulgarian lobby in North America.

The encounters between Prof. Gibbens and Lazar Kisselintcev, head of the Information Bureau of MPO in New York, take place on 14th and 15th of November 1928, in Chicago. In a detailed and open exchange of opinions, MPO's representative, clarifies the existing situation in and around IMRO, declaring that, the patriotic Macedono-Bulgarian emigration in USA does not approve of the political assassinations - a position in accordance with the official declaration of the Seventh Congress of MPO, of September the same year. Kisselintchev adds that MPO does not sympathize with the violent methods in the politics and has nothing to do with the assassination of Gen. Protogorov.

Satisfied by what he has heard, Prof. Gibbens declares that, the information received "will not be use for publications, but is for the State Department."<sup>14</sup> At the end of the talks, he gives MPO the idea for a coalition with the numerous Croatian emigration in USA. A similar anti-Serbian political formation in the new world, would provoke more seriously the American public opinion.



No evidence exists, however, the idea to be induced by State Department's orders. The fact that Gibbens negotiates with Kisselintchev at the demand of the diplomatic establishment in Washington, however, can not exclude such possibility at all. More so, very soon, this idea will be proposed to the Macedono-Bulgarian emigration in USA personally by the Head of the Middle East Section of the State Department. After the talks with Gibbens, in the end of 1928, the CC of MPO orients its political course for unification of the Macedono-Bulgarian lobby in America with the numerous Croatian patriotic emigration. The similar situations created by the policy of the Serbian authorities in Zagreb and Scpie, provide favorable conditions for substantial enlargement of the spheres of influence of the, sympathizing and supporting the struggles of the enslaved Bulgarians of Vardar and Aegean Macedonia, forces. In result, during the 30-ies the Macedono-Bulgarian lobby in USA, gains one of its most important strategic allies in the resistance to the denationalization and assimilation policy against the Bulgarians in Yugoslavia and Greece.<sup>15</sup> By declarations, articles in the press, public manifestations and delegations to the most authoritative institutions, the American citizens of Bulgarian and Croatian origin, in New York, Detroit, Chicago, Indianapolis, Pittsburgh and others raise their voice in the defence of the Bulgarian minority in Vardar and Aegean Macedonia.<sup>16</sup>

The events in Macedonia in 1928, activate again the old friend of Macedonia - Albert Soniksen. In spite of his already advanced age, he carries alive in his heart, the truth on the fate of this Balkan land. The crisis provoked by the assassination of Gen. Protogerov, is the motive for the editors of the authoritative "Social Encyclopedia" to contact the expert on the Macedonian question, Albert Soniksen, with the demand for a detailed article on the history of IMRO and its struggles' aims. On January 5th, Soniksen informs the Head of the Information Bureau in New York, Lazar Kisselintchev, on this favorable possibility and asks for the latest literature on Macedonia, so that he can fulfill the accepted

engagement on time. /Soniksen reads, write and speaks very well Bulgarian./

The offer is accepted with gratitude. A detailed information is sent to the National Committee of the Macedonian Bulgarian Emigration in Sofia, on the prospective of Soniksen telling the truth on Macedonia, in one of America's most popular and authoritative encyclopedias. In response, the Macedonian Scientific Institute in Sofia immediately sends to Soniksen's address, all its important editions on the character of the liberation movement of the Bulgarians in Vardar and Aegean Macedonia. Soniksen fulfills his engagement and writes new valuable pages on the Bulgarians in Macedonia. For the following three years, until his death in 1913, this eminent American democrat and humanist, fulfills his last, voluntary engagement to the historical truth connected with the history of the Macedonian question. Thus, he leaves a bright example in the development of American slavistics, on how the political situation can not change the opinion of a specialist during his whole lifetime.<sup>17</sup> Meanwhile, publications of authors of his class, in the beginning of the 30ies, clarify the actual events on the Balkans and stimulate for new initiatives the Macedono-Bulgarian lobby.

In March 1931, the member of CC of MPO and Head of the Information Bureau in New York, Lazar Kisselintchev, undertakes, for a third time, a diplomatic raid on Washington in connection with the Macedonian Question. During the second half of the month, he is invited for talks with the Head of the Middle East Section of the State Department.<sup>18</sup> In details are discussed the perspectives of the Bulgaro-Croatian emigrant political front in the United States. Lazar Kisselinchev's impressions are that, as the State Department officially discusses this idea with a representative of the Macedono-Bulgarian emigration, it obviously considers such a coalition a strategic reserve of the American politics on the Balkans in the future.<sup>19</sup> Such a conclusion permits CC of MPO to increase substantially its cooperation with the main Croatian



emigrant organization “Hurvatsko Kolo”. On February 27th, 1929, a document for stable alliance in the anti-Serbian struggle is signed, giving new strength to the Macedono-Bulgarian lobby. In the beginning of the 30-ies, it organizes impressive joint celebrations of historic anniversaries, protest actions against Belgrade's policy, exchange of delegations for the annual congresses of MPO and Hurvatso Kolo.

During his visit to the Middle East Section of the State Department, Lazar Kisselinchev sees for himself, that they regularly receive and follow the contents of “Macedonian Tribune”, the MPO's printed organ. As reference book on the macedonian problems, the American diplomats use the well known 1905 “Memoir of IMARO on Macedonia”. He is handed a list of 14 titles of new books on Macedonia, to be provided for the needs of American diplomatic service. The order is, of course, fulfilled at once, as on the well informedness of the Middle East Section, depended important nuances of the policy on the Balkans. The Information Bureau considering these titles to be of biggest interest to the specialists on the Balkan problems, has them send out to other 1500 addresses throughout the United States, mainly to university libraries, newspapers' editions, politicians and others.

The support for the Macedono-Bulgarian lobby in USA, given by the State Department, although indirectly, stimulates its structures for new activities. Following ten meetings between Roger Baldwin and Lazar Kisselintchev, a new plan is developed “to put up the Macedonian question in America”.<sup>20</sup> They make a list of authors, to be invited for the writing of articles on the situation of the Bulgarians in Vardar and Aegean Macedonia. It is decided the series to begin with a material prepared by Prof. D. Brailsford. This plan gives results in September 1929. Brailsford article is published even in the influential English newspaper – “Manchester Guardian”. The Macedono-Bulgarian Information Bureau in New York heliographs the text and sends it out to many influential editions in the USA. At the same time, the new resolutions of the

Eighth Congress of the Macedonian Patriotic Organizations in North America are distributed to more than 3000 addresses in the United States. In response, by the end of 1928, eminent politicians, professors, journalists and public figures in USA and Europe send letters of thanks to the CC of MPO in Indianapolis. Thus, since the beginning of the 30-ies, the activity of the Macedono-Bulgarian lobby crosses the borders of the great north-American republic. For the first time, it emerges as an influential center planning, coordinating and realizing important steps for keeping awake the interest of both the American and the world public opinion on the problems of the tragic fate of the Bulgarian minorities in Yugoslavia and Greece. What could not be done officially, on the problem of the Bulgarians in Vardar and Aegean Macedonia, by the American State, due to the global political strategies of its administration, was done by those representatives of the American scientific and public circles, who have clear understanding of the drama of the macedonian Bulgarians, and therefore, fully consciously and voluntarily engage themselves in the initiatives of the Macedono-Bulgarian lobby in the United States.

In the beginning of February 1930, in USA becomes public the appeal sent to the League of Nations by the former mayor of Scopie- Dimitar Shalev and his comrades from Veles- Dimitar Iliev and Grigor Anastasov. For the first time since the implementation of the 1919 Neuilly Peace Treaty, three representatives of the enslaved Bulgarian population of Macedonia, manage to escape the control of the Serbian State Security and present to the League of Nations the question of the prevention of the anti-Bulgarian crusade of the government in Belgrade. Copy of the statement of the three Bulgarians is sent to the leader of ICDPP in New York - Roger Baldwin.

The petition, presented at the League of Nations, confirms completely the constataions of Roger Baldwin of his visit to the Balkans in 1928. That is why he calls a meeting of the Council of ICDPP on January 3rd, 1930. At the meeting R. Baldwin informs



his colleagues on the content of the important document and fully supports the demands of the three eminent macedonian Bulgarians. ICDPP is solidary with its chairman's position, as expression of its respect to the struggle of the Bulgarians in Vardar and Aegean Macedonia against the policy of their denationalization. On January 5th, 1930, ICDPP elects, as member of its Executive Council, the head of the Macedono-Bulgarian Information Bureau in New York, Lazar Kisselintchev. His name is immediately included in the official ensign of the ICDPP, together with the names of already mentioned eminent American democrats and humanists. Lazar Kisselintchev is charged with the copying of Shalev's, Iliev's and Anastasov's statement and its dispatch, on behalf of ICDPP to all interested in the macedonian problems in USA. Once again more than 3000 addresses receive the, noisily discussed in the international press, statement, deposited at the Headquarters of the League of Nations in Geneva.

Meanwhile, the international information agencies announce the forthcoming in May 1930, 59th Session of the League of Nations in Switzerland. CC of MPO judges that, with the help of the loud resonance of the statement of the three escaped Bulgarians, it could, for the first time, present for discussion the problems of the Bulgarian minorities at this forum. For this reason, MPO prepares a separate statement to the League of Nations. Considering the wide moral support given to the distribution of the document, the macedonian-Bulgarian emigration solidarises itself with the demands of the three notorious representatives of the enslaved Bulgarian population and insists on their fulfillment.

The new serious advancement of the Macedono-Bulgarian lobby in the States in front of the League of Nations, provokes a desperate reaction of the Serbian diplomacy in America. With the financial support of the Serbian diplomatic mission in Washington, a recruitment of mercenary journalists is started. They are to improve the image of Belgrade's authorities in front of the

American public opinion. These efforts, however, do not give the expected result. Meanwhile the Consul in Chicago - Kolumbatovitch heads the campaign for creation of a new emigrant organization named "Union - Vardar Banovina".<sup>21</sup> This structure was supposed to attract the Macedono-Bulgarian emigration in North America, to weaken MPO and to destroy, in fact, the Macedono-Bulgarian lobby in the USA.

For achieving these aims, Kolumbatovitch sends agents to the north-eastern towns of the States, where the biggest Macedono-Bulgarian emigrant colonies are found. With threats for prosecution of their relatives in Macedonia, people are pressed to enter the new organization. Its name "Vardar Banovina" is taken from the name given to Macedonia by the Serbian government, in its efforts of debulgarisation and assimilation of the Bulgarian population in the region. The Macedono-Bulgarian emigration, however, does not yield to the threats. After one year, the efforts of Kolumbatovitch fail completely. A union under the name "Vardar banovina" is never created. The Macedono-Bulgarian emigration in this country decisively rejects all ideas of collaboration with the Greek and Serbian administrations and does not wish to change the name of its country.

Expecting that the 59-th session of the League of Nations, can not deny a discussion on the problem of the Bulgarians in Yugoslavia and Greece, the sympathizing factors in USA, carry out important initiatives for possibilities of pressure being put in Geneva, if a debate on the minorities rights of the Bulgarians in Vardar and Aegean Macedonia commences. In May 1930, on instructions of CC of MPO, Lazar Kisselintchev arrives in Washington. He visits the Association for American Foreign Policy /AAFP/. MPO has preliminary information that there exists an "undoubted disapproval of King Alexander's regime". This Agency is known for its opinion that "the macedonian question is not solved" and that it is "a threat to peace on the Balkans."



In AAFP Lazar Kisselintchev has talks with the Chairman of the Association - James Macdonalds, the general scientific secretary - Buell, the Head of the Balkan Section of AAFP - Elisabeth MacCullum. All these people agree with Kisselintchev's conclusions that, the minorities' rights of the Bulgarians in Yugoslavia and Greece are not respected. Especially detailed are the comments of Mrs. MacCullum. Her father had been for long years diplomatic representative of his country in Turkey. She, herself, was born in Constantinople and knew perfectly well the history and tragic outcome of the macedonian problem.

In her analysis, however, she underlined an important specificity of the macedonian question, that had to be taken in consideration, when planning international defence actions: beside the legal organizations, working for the defence of the rights of the Bulgarian minorities in Yugoslavia and Greece, this struggle is supported by a powerful revolutionary organization, as the IMRO, lead by Ivan Michailov. No other European minority had such a powerful and noisy "revolutionary defender". The activities of IMRO checked the outrages of the Serbian and Greek authorities in Vardar and Aegean Macedonia. When, however, the question was presented to some of the international organization, such as the League of Nations, this, exactly, created the problems.: It makes it very easy for the representatives of Belgrade and Athens, to counteract all pressure for discussion of the Bulgarian minority rights, with the arguments that, the revolutionary actions of IMRO, provoke the authorities to implementation of force. There would have been no problems for the Bulgarian minorities in Yugoslavia and Greece had IMRO not existed!? In this way, Mrs. MacCullum synthesizes the biggest difficulty encountered by the American right-defending organizations in every attempt to put up for discussion the improvement of the situation of the Bulgarian minorities in Vardar and Aegean Macedonia. Nevertheless, AAFP promises cooperation, if the macedonian question enters the agenda of the 59th Session of the League of Nations. Lazar Kisselintchev is requested for a full list of eminent American

scientists and intellectuals, experts on Balkan history, that could be used by AAFP as lecturers. The Head of the Macedonian Information Bureau in New York recommends the professors Philip Marshall, John Bridge, Herbert Adam Gibbens, David Star Jordan and John Backels. As former experts in the 1919 Paris Peace Conference, they know very well the macedonian problem and are trusted completely by the Macedono-Bulgarian lobby in USA.<sup>22</sup>

During his May visit to Washington, Kisselintchev has meetings in the American Society for the League of Nations, the Council on International Relations, the Wilson and Carnegie Foundations as well as in the centrals of the big and influential religious organizations. There, he meets many influential Americans as the former Wilson's ministers N. Backer and G. Weekersham, the widely known journalists Arthur Brisbane of "New York Times" and Henry Kitridge of "New York Herald Tribune". All of them promise to publish materials in support of the cause, if the League of Nations give way to debates on practical measure for the improvement of the conditions of the Bulgarian minorities in Vardar and Aegean Macedonia.<sup>23</sup>

On July 7th, however, from Geneva, the news arrives, that the Assembly of the League of Nation has declined the request of the three macedonian refugees on the discussion of the minorities rights in Vardar and Aegean Macedonia. Once again, the victors in the First World War and their Balkan partners succeed in their dictate on the international organization. They do not permit any discussions on the status of the Bulgarian minorities in Yugoslavia and Greece, as this would mean reevaluation of their policy of the world structure of 1919.<sup>24</sup>

The League of Nations's position on the minorities' rights, in the beginning of the 30-ies, has tremendous resonance in the whole civilized world. For everybody, clearly, the League of Nations, can not in fact, fulfill its role of an unbiased arbiter in the international



relations. It becomes definitely an instrument of support of the political status quo, ordered by the countries victors in the First World War. Therefore, in this period, its influence and authority begins quickly to decrease. In the situation of revisionist attitudes in Europe, the League of Nations definitely loses its positions of a real factor in the international relations. With this disappear all hopes for peaceful solution of the status of the Bulgarian minorities in Yugoslavia and Greece. The number and the force of the arguments for further development and activity of the Macedono-Bulgarian lobby in the United States, also diminish seriously. What could be the point of it, if the White House follows a policy of isolationism and the League of nation even refuses to put up the question of the minority rights of the Bulgarians in Vardar and Aegean Macedonia? <sup>25</sup>

Extremely unfavorable effect on some of the activities of the Macedono-Bulgarian lobby in USA, in the period 1930-1934, has the Great Depression in the world. Due to bankruptcies, the CC of MPO loses substantial amounts of money. The Macedono-Bulgarian lobby, due to unemployment, is in difficult financial situation. Under these circumstances, for a period of five years, MPO is unable to organize frequent mobilizing campaigns of its followers, due to the financial difficulties. <sup>26</sup>

In addition to all this, the government of Bulgaria, after the military coup d'etat, on May 19th 1934, bans all legal organizations of the Macedono-Bulgarian emigration in Sofia. The whole public and political life is rearranged on autocratic basis, decreasing the possibilities for a free political activity on the Balkans to the minimum. This new control in Bulgaria, in fact, strangles the main center of the fight for the defence of the Bulgarian minorities in Vardar and Aegean Macedonia- this of free Bulgaria. Thus, the Macedono-Bulgarian lobby loses its main and most credible ally in Europe. All this, as well as the isolationism course of the USA, even under Roosevelt's administration, explain the reasons for the gradual complication of the working conditions and activity of the

American Macedono-Bulgarian lobby. Its activity, however, is paralyzed only in the end of the 30ies with the outbreak of the Second World War.

Inspite of all these circumstances, however, not everything is lost during the period examined. The experts on Macedonia are in the United States, Although infrequently, they continue to write honest articles on the gravest problems of the Balkans - Macedonia's problems. Their most impressive actions, in this wholly changed situation, is the presence at the annual congresses of the Macedono-Bulgarian emigration in North America. There, the old friends of the macedonian Bulgarians, give moving speeches in defence of their causes in the Vardar and Aegean part of the region. Therefore, when examining the interest toward Macedonia in the USA till the mid 40-ies, it is worthwhile to take a closer look at this formidable manner of support, which is a valuable page in the history of the Macedono-Bulgarian lobby in the United States in the period between the two wars.

On September 3rd, 1933, the 12th regular Congress of MPO takes place. At his own request, guest of the Congress is Prof. Arthur Andrews. He is given the word for presenting his greetings. In a long presentation Prof. Andrews describes his 1925 journey to Pirin Macedonia. He depicts the impressive law and order existing in this region and gives extremely high evaluation to the moral values of the macedonian Bulgarians." When we arrived in a mountainous village in the region of Petritch, as well as in Djumaya, they told me to go and look after my business, while the luggage can stay in the car and that I should not worry about it, because nobody is going to take it. To my question "how is this possible, when even in America this is not possible?, I was answered, that the order set in this region, guarantees the life and property of everyone. I had the chance to verify it for my self." ends Prof. Andrews.<sup>27</sup> His theses is to prove, the complete difference between the situations existing in the Pirin and the other two parts of Macedonia.



The 13th Congress of MPO is held in the beginning of September 1934 in Fort Wayne. Official greeting to the Congress are presented by the Mayor of the second of importance town in Indiana, David Hossy. He also gives very high evaluation of the civil virtues of the macedonian Bulgarians living in the colony in Fort Wayne. He concludes: "You are good and freedom-loving people and I am happy to congratulate you from my name and from the name of the town. Your fight is great and your meeting /congress/ here, expresses your desire to see your people, in a far away country enjoy the same liberty and rights, we enjoy in America. We, Americans respect those people who fight for liberty and that is why in the different towns of our immense country, you will see monuments of national heroes of different countries."<sup>28</sup> Telegrams of congratulation of similar meaning, are sent by the Member of Congress of Indiana- James Farley, by Prof. F. Kruger and other eminent Americans.

The assassination of the King of Yugoslavia, Alexander Karageorgievitch, in October 1934 in Marseilles, once again brings to the front pages of the American editions the macedonian question. On November 2nd, the American Academy for Political and Social Sciences organizes, in Philadelphia, a special scientific conference on the Balkans. Chairperson to its sessions is D. Morgentaw – former plenipotentiary minister in Turkey in the period of the First World War. His son is finance minister in Roosevelt's administration. Official speakers of the conference are Prof. John Backels, Arnold Wallfears and Edgar Fisher. Prof. Bayckels' speech is wholly dedicated to the macedonian question. In it, the eminent American expert on the Balkans sates the following: "The assassination of King Alexander appears as a terribly bloody crime... But no matter how horrible is the assassination, it is not more horrible than the things being done by King Alexander's gendarmes for the last ten years in Macedonia". Afterwards Prof. Bayckels proves, that the macedonian Slavs "are closely related with the Bulgarians", that they speak a language "understandable

by every Bulgarian". The Serbian authorities in Scopie have submitted to destruction "the Bulgarian civilization" in the region around the Vardar river, for the aim even closing the Bulgarian-Yugoslavian border with metal nets. This barbed wire, obviously has been put up to separate the Macedonians of Serbian Macedonia from the Macedonians in Bulgaria, so as to destroy "all national connections and to force the young generation to forget the old routes, the old Bulgarian language and the old religion and to be serbicised. Maybe this can make you realize, what is the situation in this country. May be this makes you understand, why things as the assassination of King Alexander happen!? I do not approve of the murder, as I said in the beginning... But I think there is what to say, so that an end is put to such a situation as the one in the Balkans."<sup>29</sup>

The assassination in Marseilles is reason for many American journalists, for a prolonged period of time, to write extensive articles on the Balkan's national problems. Especially impressive is the series by the eminent publicist of the 30-ies, Johannes Style, published in the well-known "New York Post". This expert on the macedonian problem, also describes in detail, the Serbia's' installation of a metal wire net around the newly created state, to break all contacts between the Bulgarians in Vardar Macedonia and their brothers in Bulgaria. Belgrades' aim is one – to denationalize the Bulgarian population around the Vardar River. J. Style even states that the Serbian authorities are: "proud" of some of the successes in this field, because in Vardar Macedonia "already there are no Bulgarian schools, the teachers and priests have been chased away, the church ceremonies are serbicised".<sup>30</sup>

During 1935, the American press several times pays attention to the fate of the Bulgarian political prisoners in Vardar Macedonia. In August, the International Committee for Political Prisoners in New York sends a letter to the Yugoslavian plenipotentiary minister in Washington, specifically on the deteriorated condition of Dimiter Chkatrov, sentenced to ten years of imprisonment. The



document signed by Roger Baldwin, Arthur Garfield and John Holmes is published by the newspapers. It states: "The announced facts are, that in Scopie, Macedonia about 20 macedonian students were tried in 1927, because of their refusal to change their Bulgarian language with Serbian. Among these students was Dimitar Chkatrov. The young man, sentenced to 10 years imprisonment, tried to escape Nish's prison because of the tortures. He was captured and brought back, refusing again to sign a declaration for Serbian nationality. In February 1935, he was transferred to the prison in Sremska Mirtovitsa. During his transferal, he was kept in the Belgrade prison, submitted to brutal tortures, having shaken his health."<sup>31</sup> Requesting the official opinion of the Serbian State on the case, the members of the American humanitarian organization insist Belgrade to put an end to the repressions over the Bulgarian population in Vardar Macedonia.

As guest of the 19th Congress of MPO, held on September 1-3 1940, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania is invited Prof. G. Routcheck. After meeting the delegates and the guests of the Congress he is "astonished by the force of the movement, its unity, the self-sacrifice of its members and the consistency in the achievement of the aims set," as he himself states afterwards to the press. "Prof. Roucheck became our friend and as such he spoke at our congress"<sup>32</sup>, states CC of MPO. His joining of the Macedono-Bulgarian lobby in USA is considered a new big achievement "for the defence of the Bulgarian spirit in front of the American public opinion".<sup>33</sup>

The 21st Congress of MPO takes place in September 1942 in St. Louis. Its guests are the Mayor of the city Joseph Holland and the Professors Harry O'Neil and Cyrill Black. In the statement, after the Congress, it is said: "Prof. Black, having lived for eight years in Bulgaria, had the possibility to know well not only the Bulgarian language, but also the culture and political development of the Bulgarian people. First, he spoke in English. He described a trip he

made from Sofia to Dupnitsa, Gorna Djumaya, Petritch, Koulata, Salonica and other parts of Macedonia. After finishing his speech, the public applauded him loudly demanding Prof. Black to say something in Bulgarian. The professor, in fact, speaks perfect literary Bulgarian. He greeted everybody and wished successful activity of the congress.”<sup>34</sup> Concerning Prof. O'Neil's statement, the information on the work of the congress says.: “He had a very meaningful speech on the struggles in Macedonia, as well as, on the justful causes of the fight in Macedonia since before the Ilinden uprising, ending his speech with the postulates of the Atlantic Charter, where Macedonia may have hope to gain its liberty and rights. Prof. O'Neil's speech was listened to very attentively and greeted with loud applause.”<sup>35</sup> In fact, Prof. Harry O' Neil is the first representative of the Macedono-Bulgarian lobby in the USA, who during the World War II, proposes the idea, Macedonia's question to be solved on the basis of the principles of the Atlantic Charter, formulated by Roosevelt and Churchill several months before. Thus, the Bulgarians in Macedonia may receive a really democratic social system and unlimited political freedom.

In view of the forthcoming end for Bulgaria as participant in the Second World War, in the summer of 1944, the American newspapers begin regular information on Bulgarian topics. On September 6th, the international observer Berg Holt describes in “Christian Science Monitor”, the public and cultural improvements, done by the Bulgarian authorities, during the second Bulgarian administration of the region in the period 1941-1944. “The Bulgarians almost finished the railroad Sofia - Scopie. The last informations are that only two tunnels are left to be constructed, so that the line is opened and starts functioning. In Scopie another university, bearing the name of King Boris is opened. Besides many schools, 17 high-schools, big number of peoples' universities and many public libraries have been opened.”<sup>36</sup> These facts give him reason, even at that time, to conclude that Bulgaria has never behaved as “occupator” in Vardar Macedonia in the years of the war. On the contrary, the



period of the second Bulgarian administration in the beginning of the 40-ies, is evaluated by the American analyst, as the most dynamic period in the cultural and economical development of the region, since its partition in 1913 – irrespective of the wartime situation.

As guest of the 22-nd Congress of MPO, held in September 1943, in Cincinnati, Ohio, is invited Prof. Peter Vardgess. Like Prof. O'Neil in 1942, he also advises the Macedono-Bulgarian emigration in USA to look for definitive solution for the “Macedonian Question”, not in the policy of YCP and Tito's plans, known already to the American public, but in the principles of the Atlantic Charter proposed by Roosevelt and Churchill: “Our victory against hitlerism, fascism and nazism will bring liberty to all enslaved people. Today your organization /MPO/ and your principles are really timely”, says Prof. Vardgess. “You help keep up high the flame of liberty and justice in unique possibility for all to live everywhere irrespective of race, color and religious beliefs.”<sup>37</sup>

The dramatic changes in the Balkans in the autumn of 1944, are the reason for the invitation of Prof. Albert Laibayer by CC of MPO as official speaker of the 23rd Congress of MPO in September. He is the biggest expert in USA on the “Macedonian Problem” in the end of the Second World War, as his whole life is closely connected with the Balkan political problematics. Since 1900 till 1906, the young Laibayer is teacher in the Robert College in Constantinople, where he becomes acquainted in detail with the history of the Bulgarians and the essence of the “Macedonian Question”. In 1913, he becomes professor in History in the Illinois University in Urbana, where, until 1945 reads lectures and specialized courses on Balkan history. In 1918-1919, the American scientist is official member - expert of the Wilson's delegation to the Paris Peace Conference. During its sessions, he travels with the diplomatic mission to Constantinople and Syria, as well as visits Sofia, in order to help with the setting of just borders in this part of

Europe. He visits again the Balkan states in 1925 and 1936. In this way, Prof. Laibayer, eminent specialist on near-east history, has not only studied, but has personally participated in the development of the macedonian problems in its most dramatic periods between 1900 and 1944. Therefore, his opinion on the essence of the macedonian question and the means for its solution is of extreme importance in the end of the Second World War.

In his extensive report, in front of the delegates of the Congress, Prof. Laibayer first describes the geographic borders of Macedonia, stressing on the fact that, Salonica is a most natural gate of the region to the world. Afterwards, the American professor, pays special attention to the problem of national identification of the population in Macedonia. He states the following: "For thirteen whole centuries before 1919, it has been predominantly Slavonic. When the Bulgarians leave the region of Volga and form their specific variant of the Slavonic language and traditions, they populate in majority the whole of Macedonia. This has to be stated clearly, as all evidences preceding the 70-ies /of the 19th century/ show, that the main element in the population was the Bulgarian. Undeniable and unchangeable fact is, that Macedonia was Bulgarian".<sup>38</sup> To support his own conclusions, Prof. Laibayer quotes the opinion of his personal friend - the French colonel Leon Lamouche, also well informed on Macedonia, as he states the same thing "because travelers of different nationalities- French, German, English like Lee, Han, Amie Bouye, Kanitz, the Tcheck historian Iretchek and many others agree with this fact."<sup>39</sup>

In the second part of his report, Prof. Laibayer examines the difficult fate of the macedonian Bulgarians after the partition of the region in 1913, expressing the hope that during the peaceful postwar reconstruction of Europe, the Great Powers can not bypass with indifference the gigantic struggle for liberty in this important part of the Old Continent. As far as the formula is



concerned, he is follower of the idea of an inter-Balkan agreement, which does not exclude any of the Balkan states.

The impressive performance, of the best expert on the macedonian question, is the last one of the Macedono-Bulgarian lobby, before it and the public in the United States learn, that the government of YCP lead by J. B. Tito have already undertaken separatist steps for the unilateral solution of the “Macedonian Question” in the borders of Yugoslavia, with the creation of Federative Republic of Macedonia, including only the Vardar part of the region. From that moment on, the “Macedonian Question” enters a completely new phase of development, with the “creation” by decrees of a new “macedonian nation”, “new macedonian Language” and “new macedonian culture” on anti-Bulgarian basis. This policy of YCP is in complete contradiction with, what the Macedono-Bulgarian lobby in USA knew and defended as the objective historical truth on the “Macedonian Question” till the end of the Second World War. However, in order to leave a trace for the following generations and especially for the future young researchers on the macedonian problems, so that they know the truth on the specialists's opinions on Balkan history in the USA for the period until the creation of the “Macedonian nation”, Hristo Anastassov publishes 1945 in St. Louis a volume entitled “The case with autonomous Macedonia”, a collection of all the opinions of eminent experts on the problem, including the American ones. In this book, the opinions of American experts on the macedonian question can be seen until the creation by YCP of the “macedonian nation” in Scopie.

## CONCLUSION

The interest of the American public for Macedonia has more than one hundred years old history. The facts show that, it arises as an important aspect of the mutual Bulgaro-American cultural connections and relations in the end of the first quarter of the 19-th century. After the partitioning of Macedonia from the free Bulgarian state, under the conditions of the 1878 Berlin Peace Treaty, the Americans residing in the Balkans continue to support the just thesis, that the newly created “macedonian question” in its essence is a “Bulgarian question”. Until the end of the Second World War, all Protestant missionaries, professors in “Robert College”, American diplomats, scientists and journalists, having visited this part of the world, defend this position. For a century and a half, there have been written and published in the most influential periodical and daily American editions more than 15 000 pages of printed text, inevitably proving the predominating Bulgarian ethnic image of the region Macedonia, which give strong support to the efforts for completion of the processes of national liberation and unification of the Bulgarian people.

In 1919, the ignoration of the “factor America“ by France and England, in the postwar construction of the world and the partition of Macedonia by the 1919 Neuilly Peace Treaty, create a parallel negative attitude in Bulgarians and Americans towards the Versailles treaty system. On this basis, in the 20ies and the 30ies, a small but active “Macedono-Bulgarian lobby” is formed, acting mainly in USA and Canada. Till the end of World War II, it works actively for informing the international public opinion on the policy of systemic denationalization of the Bulgarians in Vardar and Aegean Macedonia. The measures taken by YCP and its leader J.B. Tito in the autumn of 1944, for the creation of the new “Macedonian nation” in Republic of Macedonia, on an anti-Bulgarian basis, ignore completely what has been written by the experts on the “macedonian question” in the United States, for the



period since the 30-ies of the 19-th century till the 40-ies of the 20-th century. This fact, too, proves the inconsistency of the “macedonist policy”. It proves that, it contradicts the objective historic truth. The policy of neomacedonism ignores completely the opinion of the impartial international observers on the macedonian problem of a century's duration of no specific and prejudiced interests when forming their position on the topic discussed.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

- YCP - Yugoslavian Communist Party
- IMARO - Internal Macedonian Adrianople Revolutionary Organization
- SMAC - Supreme Macedonian-Adrianople Committee
- LN - League of Nations
- IMRO - Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization
- MPO - Macedonian Political Organization
- ICDPP - International Committee for the Dittence of Political prisoners
- AAFP - Association for American Foreign Policy



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